

BUREAU OF NAVIGATION BULLETIN NUMBER 91

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PROBABLE INTEREST TO THE SERVICE.

OFFICER PERSONNEL

Prospective Vacancies.

From a survey made by the Bureau of Navigation of the prospective vacancies at sea during the next year it appears now that they will be filled as follows:

Command

Classes 1898-1899-1900 Battleships.
Class 1901 Light Cruisers and Destroyer Squadrons.
Classes 1902-3 Transports and Tenders.
Class 1904 Tankers.
Classes 1905-6 Destroyer Divisions and Auxiliaries.
Classes 1907-1913 Destroyers.

Executive

Classes 1906-7 Battleships.
Classes 1907-8 Light Cruisers.
Classes 1907-1910 Tenders.
Classes 1914-1919 Destroyers.

Heads of Department

Classes 1908-1914 Battleships.
Classes 1911-1915 Light Cruisers.

Fitness Reports.

The new form of fitness report, which has been issued to the service, was prepared after a long and thorough study of old forms and consideration of recommendations with regard to the necessity for a new form which would be more complete than any of the previous forms. The methods of rating and marking personnel in many industrial institutions throughout the country were studied. After the form was finally decided upon and issued to the service, many officials of industrial institutions, who had assisted the Bureau by explaining their systems, were furnished with copies and their comments were requested. Of the many comments received, the following quotation from the head of the personnel department of a company employing many thousands of men represents a fair average. It is therefore published as of probable interest.

"It seems to me you have made a very decided improvement in the new form over the old one, particularly with reference to the judgment on personal qualifications. As you point out in your letter, there is no longer any necessity for considering averages or making comparisons between individuals. Your definitions under each quality are clear, and there should be no trouble in a person making the rating arriving at a pretty close judgment of the

degree to which any officer possesses those qualities.

"I think you have hit upon a system of rating that is far better than the use of the various words indicating degree which we have used, and you have given us food for thought when it comes time for us to revise our judgment blank.

"Your new form reduces to a minimum the tendency on the part of the person making the rating to be enthusiastic or conservative, as your definitions pretty clearly limit the rater to carefully considered expressions of opinion. Of course, it will never be possible to eliminate entirely the personal tendencies of the man making the rating. Some men will always rate higher than others, and that fact will have to be reckoned with in analyzing the ratings after they are made. However, I think you are considerably closer to it than any form that we have seen."

RECRUITING

Letter of Appreciation.

The Bureau receives many letters from parents and guardians of enlisted men. Although some of these letters can hardly be considered as complimentary, by far the greatest number express appreciation of what life in the Navy is doing or has done for the average enlisted man. The following extract from a letter recently received is self-explanatory:

"Please permit me to express my high regard for the U. S. Navy and what the training therein has done for my son,-----, who finished the course in electrical firearms at Washington, D. C., and has returned to his ship, the USS----- of the Pacific Fleet, after a furlough at home in July.

"My heart was filled with joy to see the way my fatherless boy had been cared for and trained in his chosen calling, the U. S. Navy.

"----- left home a little over two years ago, an average good moral boy, but awkward, a little wilful, and slow in decision. He was just the age where a boy needs his father most.

"----- was at home in July. He has developed wonderfully in every way that a mother could desire, and I'm proud of the chance my boy has to grow into fine noble manhood.

"I'm so impressed by the good my son has received in the Navy that I believe (as he told me) that I'd make a good Navy Recruiting Officer.

"My younger son, here at home, wishes to join the Navy too, but if possible after his training wishes to be allowed to get on the same ship with his brother.

"Therefore, if permissible, I request that----- be permitted to go on the same ship with his brother, ----- if he joins the Navy.

"If my request is granted, will you please inform me just what to do to have this arrangement carried out."

The Chance to Save.

There are some who claim that it is impossible for a bluejacket to save money. In order to save, a man must have the desire and the will. As an example of what can be done in this respect is shown in the accomplishment of -----, seaman, first class, who has just completed an enlistment and was paid off from the U.S.S. PENNSYLVANIA.

"----- was a man of exceptional merit, industrious, courteous and a good mechanic as a shipfitter on board. Twice he refused a higher rating. Knowing that he was not going to re-enlist, he preferred to remain a first class seaman so that some other man could get the rating for which a vacancy existed; a splendid instance of good shipmate spirit. But the beautiful part of his attitude was that he had a widowed mother to support, and by earning additional money as sharpshooter, etc., he was enabled to send her \$1,500 during his four years service, which is considered exceptionally meritorious."

TRAINING

Manuals.

Recent comment has been noted in a ship's paper that many enlisted men lack information as to where they can obtain copies of the Bluejacket's Manual. These, as well as other manuals, are furnished to ships in sufficient numbers to provide for proper instruction. In view of the cost of printing, it is obvious that manuals cannot be furnished in sufficient numbers so that all hands will be supplied, nor can the Bureau supply copies for sale on board ship. Men desiring to purchase the Bluejacket's Manual may apply to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., who will furnish a copy at the cost of

\$1.50. Other manuals issued by the Bureau can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents in similar manner.

Machinist's Mate School.

The Bureau has been conducting a study of service schools with regard to methods of instruction and to determine their practical value. As a result of these investigations, insofar as pertains to the machinist's mate school, it has been found that although graduates may not make an immediate impression, due to their unfamiliarity with ships, they do, nevertheless, reach the rating of second class machinist's mates during their first enlistment, much more frequently than men of engineering ratings who have not had the benefit of service school training, and, on the whole, they reach that rating in a shorter period of time. A number of recent changes at the machinist's mate school are calculated to improve the quality of graduates. These changes include an increase of actual shop time, with a corresponding increase in the amount of practical work done. It is expected that, as a result, graduates will be of more immediate value in the future, than in the past.

Radio School.

Requirements for successful completion of the radio operator's course have been changed to require ability to take the regular intercept schedules recording on the typewriter. This should result in graduates being more immediately available as watch standers on board ship. It devolves upon ships to which graduates are sent to further their training in the theory and types of radio apparatus, as well as in other subjects not necessary to the immediate work which a graduate should be capable of doing.

Training Courses.

A few years ago, the Commander Destroyer Force Atlantic Fleet made the following comment on the Bureau of Navigation educational courses:

"Such education and training should be made a part of our routine. We cannot and must not force men to take a course of study, but we must so lay out our routine that if they do take a course that will educate them for their naval work they will receive their instruction during working time.

"Ships in which this plan has been followed have developed skilled men with great rapidity and have increased their ship's efficiency in a surprising way. But to do it the educational system has been fitted into the organization and work and not left merely as an appendage.

"Our system requires practical every day work in the trade, backed up by voluntary study outside of working hours, and augmented by regular and routine instruction given at fixed times during working hours."

Reports received in the Bureau indicate that considerable interest is being evinced in the matter of educational courses. In some cases, voluntary study has been placed on a competitive basis, while in others no great stress has been laid on the matter of volume. In the matter of education, as well as all other matters, the provision of facilities, augmented by proper encouragement to men who desire to better themselves, should be productive of beneficial results. The large variety of courses provided are intended to cover every possible need. They are designed to work in with organized systems. In order that a system of education may be a success, it must be so devised that its primary object is to benefit the Navy. It will not run itself - it must be properly administered. Investigations conducted by the Bureau show a reawakening of interest in the educational movement, and a trend toward training as a part of routine. This is most gratifying. Pursued to reasonable ends, it will result in the education of men for the Navy instead of for the individual. The effort thus directed will, as a logical sequence, benefit the men themselves.

In connection with the matter of educational courses, it is interesting to note the great increase of issue. The following table summarizes new textbooks and courses and revisions printed, and the number issued:

	Courses and	Total Number	Total Number
	Revisions Printed	of Copies Printed	of Copies Issued
1925	13	40,000	27,886
1926	17	50,500	33,564
1927	25	97,500	67,276
1928	25	116,400	45,825
(to Oct.			
1)			

Issues of courses made during the first three quarters of the current calendar year, show the following distribution:

Seamanship Branch	10,251
Engineering Branch	7,619
Deck Artificer Branch	1,020
Communications "	7,006
Special Branches	4,154
Academic Courses	3,683
Miscellaneous	6,215

Total 39,948

Issues of textbooks during the present year, to 1 October 1928, are as follows:

Textbooks Issued

Seamanship	66
Engineering	679
Deck Artificer	743
Special Branches	1,735
General	2,654
Total	<u>5,877</u>

It will be seen from the foregoing that, although continuous service is on the increase, there is no decrease in the desire to learn and no lessening of training effort.

Transportation to South America.

The following letter from W.R.Grace & Co., owners and operators of steamship lines to South America, is quoted for information:

"The Honorable, The Secretary of the Navy,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:-

In view of the approaching visit of the United States Fleet to Peruvian and Chilean waters, we beg to assure you that the firm of W.R.Grace & Co. and the Grace Line are desirous of doing anything they can to make this visit a great success.

As you know, we have branches and agencies in practically all ports and in the principal inland cities and towns of the West Coast of South America, and our association with vessels of our navy extends as far back as the Civil War.

We are sure a warm welcome from the people of Chile and Peru awaits the fleet and would appreciate your communicating to the Commander in Chief of the fleet our cordial invitation for the officers and men to visit our branches during their sojourn in the various ports where our staff will do all they can to make them feel at home.

The presence of vessels of the United States Navy is a great influence for good understanding and friendly relations.

We will greatly appreciate any advice from you as to ways and means to which we may be helpful.

Very truly yours,
W. R. GRACE & CO.,
New York City.

PJG.C